

HARTFORD – **Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01)** urged seniors and eligible residents to take note of the recently announced Medicare Open Enrollment Period which begins Saturday, October 15 and ends on December 7, 2011. Open enrollment is beginning earlier this year, and lasting for a longer period of time – seven weeks.

“Connecticut Medicare beneficiaries have many options to select from during this open enrollment period and thanks to the Affordable Care Act, beneficiaries now have access to free preventive care visits and lower costs for prescription drugs,” Congressman Larson said. “I strongly urge all Medicare beneficiaries to review their options during open enrollment and choose the plan that makes the most sense for them.”

During this period Medicare beneficiaries can begin reviewing the quality ratings for Part C and Part D plans for the 2012 year. This year the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will be identifying the plans with the highest, 5-star, rating with a gold star to make searching easier.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act Medicare Part D recipients will continue to see prescription drug costs decrease thanks to the closing of the “Donut Hole.” Additionally during 2012 Medicare beneficiaries will have access to preventive care visits without copayment and free wellness visits.

To search for a Medicare plan, beneficiaries should visit www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan .

Additional resources that may be helpful are listed below.

- www.Medicare.gov – Offers information on various plans and enrollment steps as well as various other frequently asked questions about the program.
- 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-2477) – A toll-free number to call to get information on Medicare.
- <http://www.medicare.gov/publications/pubs/pdf/10050.pdf> - A downloadable copy of the 2012 Medicare handbook.

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